

REMARKS

Claims 22-26 are presently pending. By these amendments, Applicant requests that claims 18-21 be canceled without prejudice to future presentation. Claims 22-26 have been amended. It is believed that these amendments add no new matter and their entry is requested.

35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph rejections

In view of the above amendments, it is believed that the claims as amended are adequately described and withdrawal of the claims for lack of written description is requested.

35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejections Lack of Inventive Step

Claims 22-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Applicant respectfully traverses.

Claim 22 is directed to a method for producing a body component like the car roof 22 shown in figure 11. According to the method, a multiplicity of cup-like recesses, all of which point in one direction, are formed in a flexible metal foil. Then a laminated structure is formed by applying a covering layer to that side of the flexible metal foil on which openings of said cup-like recesses are located. The covering of the recesses by means of the covering layer leads to an air cushion being formed in the recesses. This air cushion prevents the recesses, which consist of flexible material, from being compressed when the laminated structure is joined to the metal body sheet. The

laminated structure is joined to the metal body sheet by adhesively bonding the end faces of the cup-like recesses to the metal body sheet by means of the adhesive applied to the end faces of the cup-like recesses. The laminated structure is flexible and can therefore be adapted to the form of the metal body sheet. After adhesively bonding the laminated structure to the metal body sheet a thermally stable bond is formed.

The method according to claim 22 is new and inventive with regard to the prior art.

Figure 1 of Hunter shows a composite plate consisting of two face sheets 1 and 2 between which a single dimpled core sheet 3 is sandwiched. The dimples point in one direction. However, fig. 1 does not teach, disclose, or suggest first to apply a covering layer to the side of the flexible metal foil on which the openings of the cup-like recesses (i.e., dimples) are located, and then to apply an adhesive to the end faces of the recesses. Further, Hunter does not refer to a method for producing a body component.

On page 4, line 12 of the office action the Examiner states that Hunter discloses that the flexible metal sheet may have recesses in both the upward and downward directions (page 2, lines 99 to 103), therefore whichever cover layer is applied first, it will cover the openings of the cup-like recesses and the other cover will be applied to free ends of the cup-like recesses. Here the examiner fails to see that if the flexible

metal sheet having recesses in both the upward and downward directions would be joined to a metal body sheet, the cup-like recesses on one side of the metal sheet would be compressed. Furthermore, claim 22 requires that all of the dimples formed in the flexible metal sheet point in the same direction. Therefore, by teaching that the some of the dimples point in one direction (e.g., upward) and some point in an opposite direction (e.g., downward), Hunter teaches away from the present invention.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that Hunter does not teach, disclose or suggest all of the features of claim 22.

The teachings of Smith do not make up for the deficient teachings of Hunter. Smith discloses a laminated structure comprising a laminar 11 having depressions 14 which point in one direction. However, Smith does not refer to a method for producing a body component. It is further not mentioned that for producing the laminated structure a covering layer is first applied to that side on which the openings of the depressions are located.

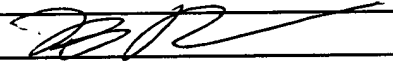
Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of Hunter and Smith does not teach, disclose or suggest all of the features of claim 22. Thus, claim 22 is allowable.

With respect to claims 23-26, all of these claims depend from claim 22. Accordingly, for at least reasons given above,

claims 23-26 are also allowable.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the pending claims satisfy the requirements of the patent statutes. Reconsideration of the instant application, withdrawal of all rejections and early notice of allowance are requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if it is deemed to expedite allowance of the application.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,					
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